

# Community Builder Neighbourhood Profile

## Pinhoe 2023-24



### Introduction

Welcome to Pinhoe! This neighbourhood profile draws on the work of the Wellbeing Exeter Community Builder to bring you a community's eye view of the neighbourhood and what happens in it. You'll not find statistics here on demographics, health, education, etc. Please read this alongside the [Joint Strategic Needs Assessment](#) tool from Devon County Council, which provides a wealth of quantitative data.

Our focus here is on local knowledge: what is it like to live here; what informal community activity is there; where are the important community focal points; what's missing, or of concern to local residents.

This is a snapshot rather than a directory, so doesn't have exhaustive listings (although we've done our best to avoid errors and omissions). It aims to highlight community strengths, and its not-so-strengths, and to provide an informed commentary on the health of community life.



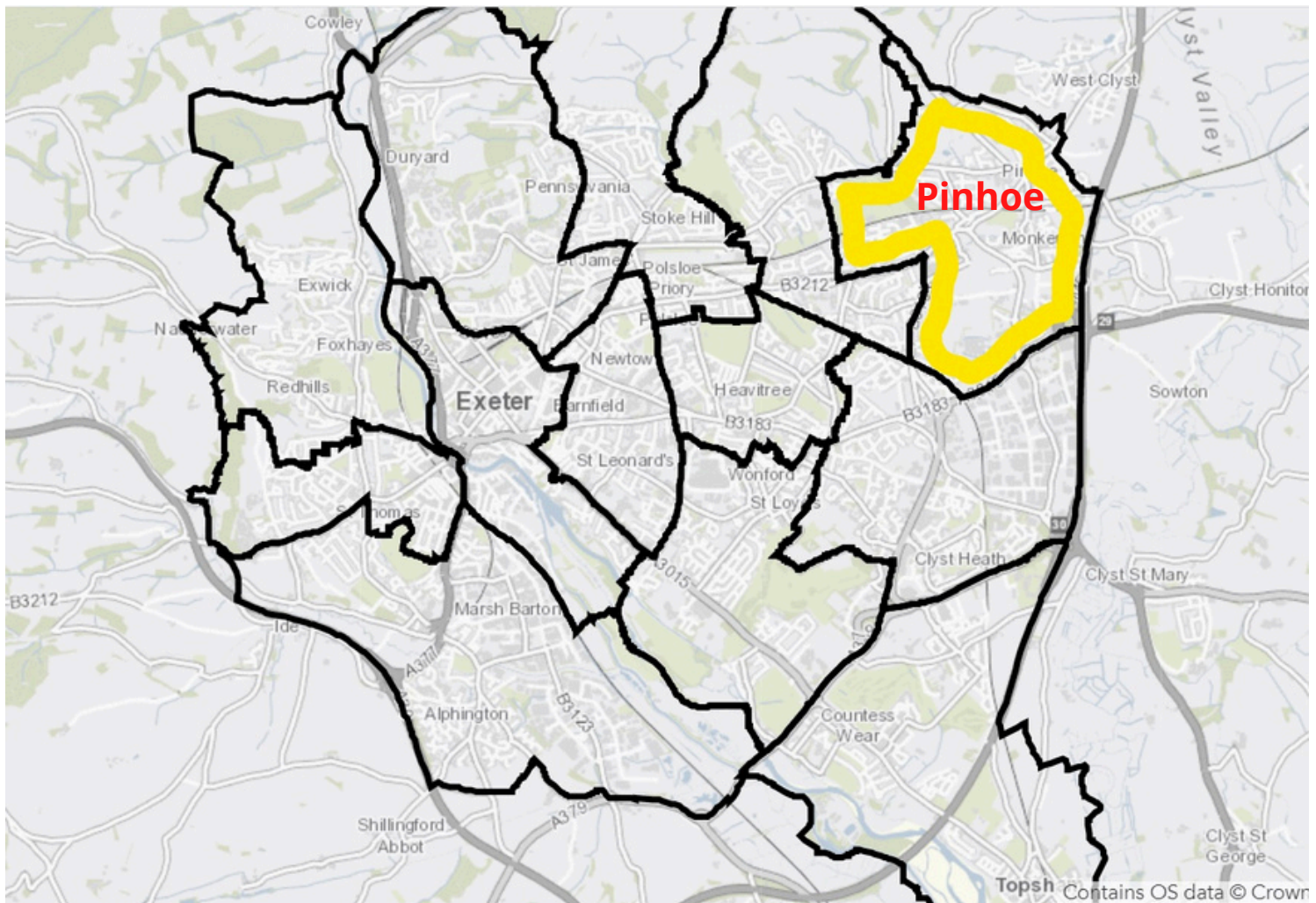
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### Picture Of A Place

Pinhoe village is on the edge of the city boundary at the eastern extreme of the ward, which extends south as far as the business developments around the Met Office, and west into Whipton, but does not go beyond the motorway. Langaton Lane, where the Scout Hut is situated, is therefore outside the ward. It is bisected by the railway line. The original village is the centre of the area residents recognise as Pinhoe: "Green fields have been eaten up but we still see our village as a much-loved community."

There are three schools in the area - Pinhoe Primary, St Luke's High School and Monkerton. The catchment for St Luke's is wide, and attracts students from Mount Pleasant, Beacon Heath and Whipton as well as Pinhoe. There is only one preschool, based at Pinhoe Primary.



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The two churches, St Michaels & All Angels and the URC Church, are deeply rooted in village life. The congregation tends to be older at both. An accessible and family-friendly service is held weekly in the school hall. St Michael's (Pinhope) runs a popular community cafe from a converted horsebox on the church office site on Church Hill.

The busy main road runs through Pinhoe linking it to Broadclyst. Although in earlier times this was a more thriving shopping location, there is still a busy Spar shop, a hairdressers, the Library, a garage, a butchers, vets, chemist, the Hall Church and an estate agent. There are good transport links, with regular buses and a station. A large Sainsbury's, Aldi and Lidl are on the outskirts of the ward, used by residents from all over Exeter as destination supermarkets.

There are two pubs - The Pinhoe Hoard, the Royal Oak (well-used by locals) and the Italian restaurant Il Grano. The new housing developments have no community space, shops or cafes. On the outskirts of the ward is Sowton, a small industrial estate with a cluster of support businesses such as Costa and Dominos. This area of the ward is used more by people travelling into Exeter from the motorways than local residents. Along Harrington Lane, Sandpiper Court is an area that incorporates small business units.

There has been substantial development in Pinhoe since 2019, to the extent that the shape of the community is changing quite dramatically – we have described this as 'refocusing'. A new school has been opened in the Monkerton area. Although the old village centre remains important for many, different groups of residents look in different directions for their local 'centre', depending on where they live. This has, among other things, underlined the importance of the location of the proposed community hub, between the 'old' and 'new' parts of the area. The newer developments are now beginning to find their feet, and there are signs of new local organisations emerging to support community activity in those areas. When a new estate is built and populated with families at a single time, there are more opportunities for residents to get to know each other, and strong communities can form.



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On a less positive note, developments (for example at the old quarry) have been met with dismay by local residents, as infrastructure is seen to be insufficient to support it. Community organisations have grown up to respond to this, and to knit together 'old and new' Pinhoe. There are ongoing conversations to protect the green space at the top of Church Lane from developers

### Green Spaces

Pinhoe is reasonably well-supplied with green spaces, evenly distributed throughout the ward.

Arena Skate Park on the western fringes of the ward, was recently extensively refurbished and is well-used as a destination park by the wider community.

Exhibition Fields – the site of Exeter Arena, with playing fields.

Eastern Fields is a much used and valued green space between Exhibition Way and Harrington Lane. It is surrounded by housing estates and industrial land and has a newly-formed Friends group that is campaigning to register this space as a village green, to protect it. This group have also opposed use of the fields by travellers, who left a large amount of mess, and has worked with the council to put up more secure barriers to prevent this happening again. Regular litterpicks take place.

Harrington Lane Play Area is adjacent to Eastern Fields. This is a well-equipped park sitting next to Pinhoe Primary School. It is used by a free fitness circuits training group twice a week. There is a MUGA. It is well used immediately after school by parents and carers.



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Station Road Playing Fields includes a MUGA and children's play area (refurbished with inclusive play equipment in 2019) and more recently the pump track added and small skate ramp, both proving very popular. It is home to football groups and, more recently, the community-led Pinhoe Albion football training team. The Community Builder and Community Physical Activity Organiser (CPAO) supported the group to get constituted and access funding. The football pitch has also benefited from recent improvements, and a popular Chat Shack meeting place for teens has been added.

There are also small play parks at Monkerton, Hill Barton Estate and Harringtons Estate. The latter has been used for a number of resident-led and Community Builder-led events. Lack of amenities make it challenging for the Community Builder to host listening events and these are weather dependent.

A newly emerging group is Friends of Pinhoe Station, which was established with support from the Community Builder. It's first project was to develop a new flowerbed, which is a showpiece at the station, with subsequent work on the upkeep of the planters and seasonal planting/funding applications. This work was in collaboration with Network Rail. Volunteers from Wild Pinhoe and Pinhoe Community Hub have been keen supporters.

The Community Builder also collaborated with the Friends of Pinhoe Station and Network Rail to engage a local artist to create a mural along the station wall. The project has been a great success with locals and attracted a lot of media interest, including from the BBC.



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### Community Hubs and What Happens In Them

Community hubs can be buildings, spaces, organisations, even people. They can be community-owned and run, council property, and commercial businesses. What they have in common is that they bring added value to the activities and energy associated with them by bringing people together in ways they might not otherwise do, being a focus for local expertise and connection, and facilitating the casual encounters that fuel fantastic community action.

Pinhoe has a wealth of established community groups and assets and has a varied range of opportunities for local people to engage in their neighbourhood. Although Pinhoe does not have a traditional community centre, it has a number of other assets such as church halls which are well-used by outside groups, and are central to community life.

**America Hall** is a large building, with two spaces available to rent out commercially (though it is heavily booked out). Various community and commercial activities are hosted, including a community-led baby and toddlers group, Weightwatchers, various dance classes plus arts and crafts groups.

Some of these draw people from across the city, and therefore many people do not consider this building to be a community centre in the normal sense. The Pinhoe Pantomime Society produce a very well-established annual community panto here. The Women's Institute and Pinhoe Angels (a women's social group) now meet here too.





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1st Pinhoe Scout Group Scout Hut on Langaton Lane hosts beavers, cubs, scouts, and explorers (children aged 6-18), as well as rainbows and brownies, the youngest sections of the Girl Guides. The hut is also available for private hire.

**Pinhoe Library** has a friends group of volunteers, with a number of residents involved. They have recently formed links with the Pinhoe Hoard and host a monthly quiz night that is well established, with a diverse range of attendees from nearby estates. The library hold regular knitting groups and also host bounce and rhyme sessions for pre-school children, attended by around 30 parents and carers.



The library makes use of local volunteers and is a valued local resource, despite its run-down building. It has a varied range of events, hosting local authors, musical events and guest speakers, and the Pumpkin Trail, organised by local residents with Community Builder support. The space can also be used for meetings. There is a popular Lego Club run on Saturdays and regular crafting sessions throughout the holidays.

United Reformed Church Hall is busy with bookings for yoga, tai chi, a pop-up café, toddler group etc. The church is keen to engage with the wider community. Recent events held here initiated by community members include a wellbeing day, supported by the Community Builder. Pinn Lane Toddlers is a popular group with a reach across Pinhoe. It has made a successful comeback after Covid and offers a thriving and supportive space.

The Hall Church on Main Road was purchased by the Devon Turkish Community, who use it as a mosque and cultural centre. it is undergoing major renovations.

Pinhoe Church of England Primary School, alongside its own PTA-run events, hosts a parents' running group. The PTA has grown in strength and is thriving.

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Pinhoe Village Facebook page started as a heritage group, growing from the informal Pinhoe Memories group. It is a well-used community page. During lockdown, [Pinhoe Village website](#) emerged, linking with Pinhoe Community Support. This was very active during the height of the pandemic, playing a big role in mobilising volunteers. It continues to support residents.

There are three private nursing homes on the edge of the ward - Cumberland Grange, Greentree Court and Alexander House. All are keen to connect to the wider community, have offered space for community use and have been very creative in their approach to reaching out. Regular activities include dog shows, scrabble groups, toddler and parents group and they also invite the wider community to host and attend events.

[Il Grano](#) coffee morning, set up with support from the Community Builder, is community-led, running on a monthly basis. It is well attended by a wide range of people.

Pinhoe Social is a more recent social group using social media to connect, but also arranging social events, including a book club and evening socials.

Pinhoe Forum developed from both these organisations, describing itself as: community publishing, co-developing a collective common: information and inspirations. Issues of concern include the impact of housing development on the ward. It has actively engaged with residents, supporting local campaigns and networks across the city.

### What Else Is Happening?

[Pinhoe Jubilee Club](#) is a traditional social club, with a vibrant skittles league, bingo, snooker, darts, bingo, euchre etc. They host a range of sporting events as well as regular live music. The Community Hub group has held skittles and pig racing events here. The club is popular and well supported by the local community.





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**Exeter Arena** is the nearest leisure centre, on the western fringes of the ward. It is also home to Isca Bowls and Bridge Centre, which runs health walks, table tennis, whist and scrabble groups, and has trialed a coffee morning in an attempt to reach out to the community. There is also a newly fitted gym.

The doctors surgery is well used and growing, and has an active PPG group. There is concern about capacity and it looks to expand. A health walk, led by the surgery, runs on a weekly basis and is well attended.

**Wild Pinhoe** is an informal group of residents that have planted wildflower beds and also worked in collaboration with Pinhoe Library and Friends of Pinhoe Station.

**Community Voices Choir** was established with support from the Community Builder and is now embedded in the community and regularly performing at locally such as in the nursing home.

The Defibrillator Group, set up with help from the Community Builder, has gone from strength to strength and is now a constituted group. The first defibrillator was installed on the wall outside the Heart of Oak pub, the second is at Pinhoe Surgery and a third has recently been installed at Pinhoe Primary School.

There are a number of toddler groups, including Parents & Toddlers at America Hall, Pinn Lane Toddlers, Bounce & Rhyme at Pinhoe Library, Bumps & Babes at Cumberland Grange and Toddlers at Alexander House.

Pinhope Church runs an outreach cafe. This is an outside horsebox cafe, offering free cake and coffee on a Friday morning from the Rectory in Church Lane.

**Hope at Home** (working with Isca Church) offers a new befriending service that visits elderly residents in their homes.

**Hill Barton Vale Residents Association** is newly formed, with Community Builder support, after a resident became concerned by issues faced with the management company and the housing developer.

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[Harringtons Residents Association](#) is another newly-emerged group, strengthened during the pandemic, and again focused on the relationship with the management company, but also plenty of opportunities to connect neighbours socially. It has grown in strength and now has a strong committee hosting regular events and producing a hyper-local newsletter for the estate. The Community Builder has played a large role in helping these resident associations grow in strength and offers advice and support on a regular basis.

Inspired by the Hill Barton trailblazer, there are now also little free libraries in the Harringtons, Tithebarn and Summerway, Westclyst. Tithe Barn and Summerway were supported with ward grants from Exeter City Council and each with their own online presence. More recently, supported with Exeter City Council ward grants, the [Hill Barton Little Free Library](#) has run open air parent and toddler reading sessions and also an adult book club.



The Puzzle Library is similar to the little libraries. One is sited at a resident's house, another at the finance shop. These grew in popularity during the pandemic.

[Clyst Caring Friends](#) is a local charity, based out of the medical practice, and runs a weekly drop-in coffee morning at the United Reform Church.

### **Spreading The Word: How Do People Connect?**

[The Pinhoe Press](#), a quarterly newsletter established in 2018, is delivered locally in hard copy by volunteers. There is also a Facebook page. Community organisations within the ward of Pinhoe qualify for a free quarter-page advert, and have reported an increase in interest in their activities since the newsletter launched. Unfortunately, after many years and supported from the started by the Community Builder, The Pinhoe Press has ceased publication.

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Pinhoe School's newsletter also periodically carries community news and information, and is available to read online.

Pinhoe Village, Pinhoe Community, Pinhoe Forum and Pinhoe Community Hub have well-used Facebook pages.

Pinhoe Parents is a closed Facebook group, describing itself as 'a friendly group for Pinhoe parents to chat and organise local events.'

There are three noticeboards in the centre of the village, including one outside the school and one in Church Lane. A local resident also displays posters on her fence. There is also a new noticeboard in Station Road park, the station near the park and on the side of Il Grano.

Premier Financial Planning has a noticeboard at its office on Station Road. Pinhoe Library has a dedicated Community Builder board as well as a general noticeboard. The surgery also displays information electronically. The Hall Church (currently closed) will display events in the hall on its noticeboard. America Hall display posters outside and inside that relate to the building.

Local residents living on prominent streets will also put up laminated posters on stakes or in windows outside their houses. Residents are keen to help spread news of local events, often volunteering to distribute flyers to local groups. The Community Hub has a new noticeboard at Station Road park.

### **Where Are The Gaps and Concerns? What Potential For The Future?**

The extensive local development has brought with it concern from residents about traffic and infrastructure. However, the new developments have made great progress in building and strengthening their own distinctive sense of community. The new and emerging community associations are one indication of this, and there will be plenty more opportunities for the Community Builder to support this work in future.



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There are many challenges on the new developments. Residents, the Community Builder and local Councillors are working closely. The adoption of roads and handovers to management companies is a lengthy process and takes years before adoption by Devon County Council takes place. There is also the complication of management companies' space for public green spaces that are difficult to hold to account. The Community Builder has come across examples of residents moved into new estates unable to access the fenced off playgrounds for many years. A good first step on the new estates is the role of the Community Builder in helping to connect residents with similar concerns and help them move into action to have a united voice.

There is growing opposition to attempts to extend development to valuable green field sites, with the accompanying loss of wildlife and green spaces. A recent well-supported petition presented to Exeter City Council called for the protection of green spaces from development that could affect the green skylines and green corridors around the city. There is a corresponding interest in tree-planting and rewilding.



Plans for the Hub, developed through community consultations, include a new base for the dilapidated library, along with a community café and sports changing rooms. There will also be meeting space, ICT facilities and small business development space. A number of community groups are hoping to relocate to or establish in the new building. It is hoped the Hub will also collaborate with the nearby GP surgery in initiatives to address social isolation and improve levels of physical activity. The Community Builder has been closely involved in supporting all aspects of this project. The Hub project has generated widespread support and interest locally and has continued to fundraise with regular events.

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More recently, the project has formed small focus groups who meet regularly. Planning has now been approved, the business plan completed and a professional bid writer appointed to support the team. The Friends of Pinhoe Library have begun to think about how it can attract some younger members, and involve more young people and families in events. This, again, is all looking forward to and paving the way for the relocation of the library to the new community hub.

There is growing concern with a proposal for car parking charges at Station Road car park.

There is a continued appetite for greening projects, although these are often informal. A recently planted orchard thrives in the Library playing fields by Wild Pinhoe. The Community Builder supports the group. Langaton Lane residents are keen to improve public green space and some trees have been planted, with plans to do more. Funding from Exeter City Council has been vital to help these projects evolve.



There is a lack of youth provision for teenagers, e.g. youth club.

The Pinhope Young People Worker plays an important role. She works closely with Pinhope Church and runs two toddler groups, both at local nursing homes. The groups are popular with local parents and carers from across the ward and wider.